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followed by the milder genius of Raphael—the father of dramatic painting—the painter of humanity: less elevated, less vigorous, but more insinuating; more pressing on our hearts; the warm inaster of our sympathies. What effort of human connection—what feature of the mind, from the gentlest emotion to the most fervid burst of passion, has been left unobserved—has not received a characteristic stamp from that examiner of men? Michael Angelo came to nature—nature came to Raphael—he transmitted her features like a lucid glass—unstained, unmodified. We stand with awe before Michael Angelo, and tremble at the height to which he elevates us. We embrace Raphael and follow him wherever he leads us. Perfect human beauty he has not represented. No face of Raphael's is perfectly beautiful—no figure of his, in the abstract, possesses the proportions which could raise it to a standard of imitation: form to him was only a vehicle of character or pathos; and to those he adapted it, in a mode and with a truth that leave all attempts at emendation hopeless. His invention connects the utmost stretch of possibility with the most plausible degree of probability, in a way that equally surprises our fancy, persuades our judgment, and affects our heart. His composition always hastens to the most necessary point as its centre, and from that disseminates—to that leads back as rays all secondary ones. Group, form and contrast are subordinate to the event, and commonplace is ever excluded. The line of Raphael has been excelled in correctness, elegance and energy; his color far surpassed in tone, in truth and harmony; his masses, in roundness, and his chiaroscuro in effect; but, considered as instruments of pathos, they have never been equalled; and in composition, invention, expression, and the power of telling a story, he has never been approached.

WITH models such as the Antinous and other precious remains of ancient sculpture, it seems wonderful that John of Bologna and other great artists should have fallen into the error of so constantly seeking to display their knowledge of anatomy, frequently injuring their finest productions by forcing the features of that science into notice. Because the moderns, among their other philosophic discoveries, found that the human body was composed of bones, muscles, tendons and ligaments, is the statuary called upon perpetually to remind us of this circumstance? Why was it so beautifully clothed with skin, but to hide the interior mechanism, and render the form attractive? Anatomy is useful as a correcter, but no more. Its influence ought only to be felt. In the Antinous the anatomist would look in vain to detect even the slightest mistake or misconception. . . . In the finest works of the ancients I have never seen a muscle caricatured. . . . This science should never be brought into evidence in a statue—it is the beautiful, round, fleshy forms of the living body only that should be displayed, even in high energetic action. . . . Even in the Dying Gladiator there is no obtrusive anatomy. Sinews, tendons and muscles are all in play; but hid as in the beautiful forms of youth, not strongly expressed or obtruded on the eye.—*Bell*.

FRESCO PAINTING.

From "Painting Popularly Explained."

THE fact that the grandest works of human genius in painting have been executed in fresco, not to speak of the great development in our times of fresco painting in Germany, and the revival of this style of art in England for the decoration of the New Palace at Westminster—will assuredly justify our treating the subject at some length; especially as the details are interesting, and there appear to be frequent misconceptions in reference thereto.

Painting in fresco—in Italian *al fresco*—takes its name from being executed upon the last coat, while it is *freshly* laid and still wet, which the plasterer puts on when finishing a room. This last coat, called by the Italians *intonaco*, is composed of finely sifted river-sand and lime mixed in certain proportions. The well-known tendency of lime thus used to imbibe water and harden, gives its peculiar character and durability to fresco. The colors being ground in water and mixed with lime when applied to this absorbent surface, become incorporated with the lime-water and sand of the plaster;* and when dry they are not to be dissolved again by water, although internal damp will in time have the most injurious effect; the basis of fresco and the colors thus become inseparable and positively harder than stone. The rapidity with which this coat of plaster dries, presents, however, to the artist one of the greatest difficulties of the process. Only so much of the plaster must be laid on as the painter can cover and complete as a portion of a picture in one day. Joinings are therefore unavoidable, and some ingenuity is necessary to conceal them by making them coincide with lines in the composition, or take place in shadows.

Only those colors can be used which light will not act upon or lime deteriorate.† The fresco painter is

* The word "plaster" is here used in a general sense; it is not to be understood that plaster or gypsum is mixed with the lime. Plaster, strictly speaking, is the Italian *gesso*, of which we have already spoken, and in old books on art, plaster casts are commonly called "gessos." The word stucco is sometimes used indifferently for plaster, for the exterior coating of a house, and for compositions used in making ornaments. A wall may, of course, be composed of any materials, if it is to be painted on when dry in distemper with colors simply diluted with water and size.

† Mr. Field, the author of *Chromatics* and other valuable works, says, in reference to the last restriction: "This need not, however, be a universal rule for painting in fresco, since other cementing materials, as strong or stronger than lime, may be employed, which have not the action of lime upon colors—such as calcined gypsum, of which plaster of Paris is a species; which, being neutral sulphates of lime, exceedingly unchangeable, have little or no chemical action upon colors, and would admit even Prussian blue, vegetal lakes, and the most tender colors to be employed thereon, so as greatly to extend the sphere of coloring in fresco, adapted to its various designs; which bases merit also the attention of the painter in crayons, scagliola, and distemper.

"So far, too, as regards durability and strength of the ground, the compo and cements, now so generally employed in architectural modellings, stucco and plaster would afford a

therefore limited to a few pigments, which are principally natural colors or earths, and consequently sober in hue. The blue is the only brilliant color in fresco; but the old masters rarely employed either the cobalt or the still more beautiful ultramarine used in modern frescoes; probably on account, partly, of the expensiveness of those colors. Their blues, therefore, being generally imperfectly prepared mineral compositions, have commonly faded: the frescoes by Guercino being one of the rare exceptions. The blacks and greys, which are nearly all derived from animal and vegetable substances, have also proved very fugitive. Lime is mixed, as we have said, with the colors; but lime itself is also used alone as a pigment for the lights, the presence of sand with the lime rendering the plaster ground a delicate half-tint. The German fresco painters consider it indispensable that the lime should be slaked and kept buried underground several years before it is used, either as a pigment or for coating the walls. Early authorities do not, however, insist upon the necessity of keeping the lime for a very long period, and there is no apparent scientific reason for doing so.

From the power of absorption, little force of shadow is attainable in fresco compared to the depth and transparency of oil painting; but this deficiency is more than compensated, for internal decoration, by the far greater luminousness of color in fresco and its breadth of bright pearly effect. The colors assume, as it were, crystalline brilliancy, yet with none of the glare of an oil painting, which prevents, if the picture be large, a great portion being seen: the colors, moreover do not become embrowned with age, like those mixed with oil. Some of the disadvantages of oil painting for large monumental and decorative works here alluded to may be observed in the Whitehall ceiling painted by Rubens. But, although the style itself of fresco is more brilliant, yet, in early frescoes, the colors were actually used pure and unbroken. These frescoes, it should, however, be remembered, were executed in chapels always pervaded by solemn twilight; the colors, therefore, would not appear at all gaudy; the gloom was, in fact, provided against by this extra brightness and crudeness of color. The same remark applies to the ancient remains at Pompeii and elsewhere. Houses in such a climate were naturally kept dark, to exclude the summer heat; the crudest tones were, therefore, harmonized, and became almost necessary.

"The power of fresco," Haydon says, "lies in light—the power of oil in depth and tone. A mighty space of luminous depth and 'darkness visible' gives a murky splendor to a hall or public building. A mighty space of silvery breadth and genial fleshiness—with lovely faces, and azure draperies, and sunny clouds, and heroic forms—elevates the spirits, and gives a gaiety and

new and advantageous ground for painting in fresco; and as it resists damp and moisture, it is well adapted, with colors properly chosen, to situations in which paintings executed in other modes of the art, or even in ordinary fresco, would not long endure." All this is true; but the word fresco is here applied to various kinds of painting which we shall find it necessary to distinguish from the true fresco employed by the greatest masters.

triumphant joy to the mind. The less shadow in decoration the better."

The material limitations, then, of fresco, and its being restricted from the resources of other kinds of painting, compel greater attention to the higher and more essential qualities of art. Its immediate and necessary connexion with the highest aims of art, precisely fits it, however, to embody those inventions which belong essentially to the domain of thought. It thus becomes a great test both of artistic knowledge and conception; and hence it is very generally acknowledged to be the noblest style of art.* An intimate acquaintance with everything represented is "essential by compulsion." Defects in composition, form, action, expression, and the treatment of drapery may be redeemed in an oil painting by various technical merits; not so in fresco. Here we have not the allurements of transparency, depth, and richness; which, though not the grand essentials of art, may yet please, and form the principal excellence of pictures worthy of commendation; on the contrary, here, there is no evading such things as anatomy, drawing, and expression.

Fresco (and of course the less durable methods of oil and distemper) is very much affected in time by the nature of the wall upon which the plaster is spread. The following are the conclusions on this subject given in the various reports of the Royal Commission on the Fine Arts, having reference to the decoration of the New Palace, Westminster. Ashlar walls, that is to say, walls composed of freestones as they come out of the quarry, are objectionable, because they become very wet in warm weather, from the condensation of the damp in the atmosphere on the cold wall. Rubble walls are worse; from the loose, incongruous materials employed: many of the most precious works of the great masters owe their destruction chiefly to the circumstance of being painted on walls of this description. Frescoes may be safely executed upon lath. But brick walls are, upon the whole, the most eligible.

As there appear to be some misapprehensions respecting the conduct of works in fresco, especially those of the colossal dimensions seen on the walls and ceilings of Continental palaces and churches, we shall offer a sketch of the method employed.

It is assumed that it is impossible to retouch a fresco painting to any extent. The portion of work undertaken in the morning must be completed during the

* Michael Angelo is reported to have said: "To paint in oil is an art fit only for women, and easy and lazy persons like Fra Sebastiano"—il colorire a olio era arte da donna, e da persone agiate ed infingarde, come Fra Bastiano. We need not, however, infer that the first clause of this sentence (which is all that is generally quoted) was Michael Angelo's unqualified opinion. This remark, made relatively to fresco, was a mere burst of anger against Sebastiano del Piombo, who had earned his reputation by oil painting, and had the insolence to try, against the wish of Michael Angelo, to persuade Paul III. to have the Last Judgment painted in oil. Michael Angelo himself painted very successfully in oil, if we may judge from the wonderful unfinished oil picture attributed to him, and lately in the Manchester Exhibition.

day. Hence every part of the design must be defined in preparatory studies. The fresco is, in fact, a copy from these, the former being traced on the wall from a finished drawing or drawings of the same size. Such large preparatory drawings are called *cartoons*. A cartoon, when of the kind prepared for tracing a fresco, is a simple black and white drawing without colors: such, for example, as the two large charcoal drawings by Agostino Carracci in the National Gallery. But an additional colored cartoon was also prepared to serve as a study of color, and a guide during the execution of the fresco. Such cartoons for fresco are preserved in the different collections throughout Europe. These finished cartoons were also designed for tapestry; the well-known series of cartoons by Raphael at Hampton Court affording a notable instance. The worker in tapestry traced the outlines, and matched as nearly as possible the colors; sometimes, however, introducing heightenings of gold.

The cartoon for a fresco is generally enlarged from small drawings of the whole composition, with the aid of careful separate studies for the more important parts. As an assistance in these drawings, several of the greatest masters (many of whom were sculptors as well as painters) modelled their figures in wax or clay, and arranged draperies on them composed of linen or muslin saturated in clay water. These models were disposed according to the intended arrangement, and from them the incidental effects of light and shade were studied. They were especially serviceable also in enabling the artist to conquer the difficulties of foreshortening; and it was by such means that Correggio painted his wonderful foreshortened figures in the cupolas at Parma.

When the fresco is to be very large, and it is found inconvenient to prepare a cartoon of the same size, the drawing may be made less in some proportionate degree, fractional or integral, and afterward enlarged by squares to the full dimensions, portion by portion; or the whole composition of the full size may be divided into two or more cartoons. Raphael's cartoon for the "School of Athens" was divided in this way; and the portion preserved in the Ambrosian Library at Milan contains the figures only without the architecture.

A finished drawing of the full size (or a portion) being ready, a part of this "working" outline, as much as can be finished in a day, is now nailed to the wall, and transferred by tracing, or, as it is also called, *calking*. This is effected either by pricking through the lines into the wet wall, and pouncing the holes with red or black dust, or by tracing the outline with a sharp point, which leaves slightly indented lines on the plaster. Besides the cartoon in which the forms and general light and shade are determined, it is desirable, for reasons already given, to have a colored sketch of the whole composition. This is frequently prepared by the oil painter, but it is ordinarily found almost indispensable in fresco, in which, when finished, it is as impossible to change colors as forms. Some few, it is true, of the great Italian fresco painters commenced at once upon the wet wall, merely marking the relative position of the figures with a few strokes of the point; but fresco painting has so many unavoidable difficulties, that the

modern artist finds it necessary to anticipate as many as possible. He has, moreover, the example of the two very greatest masters of fresco to keep him in countenance: for even the impatient genius of Michael Angelo condescended to the tedious process of pouncing, and Raphael's cartoons are likewise covered with pin holes. When any defect in the painting is irretrievable, the spoiled portion is carefully cut out and replaced by fresh plaster.

When the outline is secured on the wall, the artist can derive little assistance from any source other than his own experience. The tints, when first applied, look faint and spectral, and sink in like vanishing spirits; so that it is necessary to go over the surface repeatedly before the full effect appears. From this tendency to sink in, it must not, however, be concluded, as it is commonly, but erroneously, that fresco painting is perpetual glazing like water-color tinting. On the contrary, we find on the surface of old frescoes a gummy body of color, or *impasto*. An example of this may be seen in the "Vision of St. Catharine," by Giulio Romano, in the National Gallery: the lights on the edges of the clouds glisten from their actual relief. Mr. Wilson, in his "Continental Report" to the Fine Art Commission, says: "We find in the frescoes of the old masters every quality of execution that has a name in oil painting, although those qualities are necessarily exemplified in different degrees; we have transparency, opacity, richness; we have thin and thick painting, nay, loading, and that to an extent which cannot be contemplated in oil. We have the calm, transparent, elegant painting of the Florentines and Romans; the rich variety of the Venetians; and there are cases in which the well-nourished brush of Rembrandt seems represented in the works of the fresco painters of old Italian times."

It might be supposed impossible to remove frescoes from the walls on which they are painted. But this is easily effected; though not without great danger, if they should happen to have been finished in tempera. In this case, the subsequent touches are destroyed; an accident which also frequently occurs when frescoes are cleaned in an ignorant and careless manner. The method adopted for removing frescoes is to apply upon the face of the painting a linen cloth, covered with a kind of glue. The "intonaco," or last coat of plaster, is then carefully detached from the wall with a knife. The rough surface at the back having been rubbed down with pumice-stone, until the plaster is reduced to the thinnest state consistent with the preservation of the painting, canvas is fastened upon the back, and the cloth in front moistened and removed. The detached fresco may then almost be treated like a common oil picture, if this operation has been skillfully performed. It has now become quite a habit in Italy to remove, by this method, frescoes of interest, for sale, or for preservation in public museums.

OTHER KINDS OF PAINTING ALLIED TO BUT MISTAKEN FOR FRESCO.—As a consequence of misconception of the true nature of fresco, there are other kinds of painting mistaken for it; some of which have little in common with that manly art. The method hitherto described is

called by the Italians *buon* (good, genuine, or true fresco), and is stated by Vasari to have been adopted by the great masters. "Buon fresco" does not, however, appear to have been in use till near the close of the fourteenth century.

One substitute for genuine fresco is termed *secco* (dry), or "fresco secco," or, as it is otherwise called, 'mezzo' (half) fresco, or Florentine fresco; for, like persons as well as things of doubtful reputation, it has many *aliases*. This method of lime painting has been described by Theophilus. The following will explain in what it differs from the former process:

The plastering having been completed in the ordinary manner, it is *allowed to dry* thoroughly. The surface is then rubbed with pumice-stone, and the evening before the painting is to be commenced it is thoroughly wetted with water in which a little lime has been mixed. The wall is again moistened the next morning, and the artist then traces his outline, and commences to paint in the usual way. If the wall should become too dry, a syringe is used to wet it; and thus he can always keep the plaster in a good state for working on. He can therefore quit or resume his work at pleasure; he need not rigidly calculate his day's work; and no joinings in the painting are observable. "Work done in this way will bear to be washed as well as real fresco, and is as durable; for ornament it is a better method than real fresco, as in the latter art it is quite impossible to make the joinings* at outlines, owing to the complicated forms of outlines in ornament [the joinings are particularly observable in the Loggie of the Vatican]. But whilst it offers these advantages, and is particularly useful where mere ornamental painting is alone contemplated, it is in every respect an inferior art to real fresco. Paintings executed in this mode are always heavy and opaque, whereas fresco is light and transparent.† This process appears to have been common in Italy during the thirteenth century, and till the introduction of true fresco. The head by Giotto in the National Gallery, from the Brancacci Chapel of the Carmine at Florence, is in fresco secco.

(To be continued.)

THE true masters of politics and morality are those who attempt all the good they can execute and nothing more.

* We have already explained that these joinings are unavoidable: "These divisions in the patchwork (for such it may be called), of which all works of the kind must consist, are among the tests of fresco painting properly so called. Whenever the extent of a surface of plaster without a joining is such that it would be impossible to complete the work contained in it in a day, it may be concluded, even without other indications, though such are seldom wanting, that the mode of execution was not what is called 'buon fresco.' Walls decorated by the earlier Italian masters exhibit no joinings in the plaster having any reference to the decorations upon them. The paintings must, consequently, have been added when the entire surface was dry; and must either have been executed in tempera, or if with the lime, by means of a process called 'secca.'"—*Eastlake*.

† Second Report of the Commissioners on the Fine Arts.

Foreign Correspondence, Items, etc.

GERMANY.—At *Cologne* the completion of the old cathedral is going on energetically and with something of the spirit of the middle ages so far as the people are concerned. Funds of course are wanting, always wanting to build these structures, but no commercial scheme is resorted to, such as bonds based on pew assessments; the people contribute spontaneously through affection for the old monument, the glory of their ancient city. The working classes are particularly generous, far surpassing, indeed, with their mites, the offerings of the wealthy. In three years the exterior of the cathedral, except the towers, will be finished. We are reminded by this fine edifice to note how rapidly the Gothic style of architecture is gaining ground, becoming every day more and more prized. Why should it not? Why should not its varied elements, its arches, its clustered columns, its surfaces for ornament, be employed in the same combinations as those of Greek and Roman architecture. Why should it not be the style of palaces and houses? The plea that Gothic architecture is religious art alone, and too gloomy for domestic use or palatial display, is poorly supported by referring to the Renaissance style. What component part of the Renaissance style cannot be traced to some gloomy Greek or Roman temple. Why should we feed our eyes with its purely conventional symbols when Gothic architecture presents such a varied assortment in its superior adaptation of foliage, in its multiplicity of statues, and above all, the wider field it offers for the use of color and the place it affords for "strange devices." The proof that Gothic architecture is spreading is visible in the fact that in *Cologne* they are building military barracks in the pointed style, which is an innovation and an indication of progress.—There will take place at *Cologne* next September the second grand national exhibition and the sixth congress of the German artists, on which occasion a new *Musée* will be inaugurated.—A new synagogue has been erected with a gilded dome and four minarets, presenting a novel architectural feature in a panoramic view of the city.

The venerable Cornelius, it is said, will leave *Rome* and return to *Berlin* in April next to reside there permanently. Cornelius was born at *Dusseldorf* in 1787, and is now seventy-three years of age.

FRANCE.—Humboldt's bust, by David d'Angers, has been purchased for the *Louvre* for the sum of 7,500 francs. The bust is colossal, and is considered an important acquisition.—An exhibition in *Paris*, on the Boulevard des Italiens, or rather a series of exhibitions, for some months past have been held for the benefit of a kind of Artist's Fund Society. It has proved a successful undertaking, particularly the late exhibition, containing specimens of the French old masters. In order to render it more complete, the exhibition closed for a few days in order to add some new works, mostly drawn from private galleries. Among the artists more fully represented, are David, Prud'hon, Boucher, Watteau and Greuze.—M. Chaplin, an eminent decorative artist, has lately finished an important